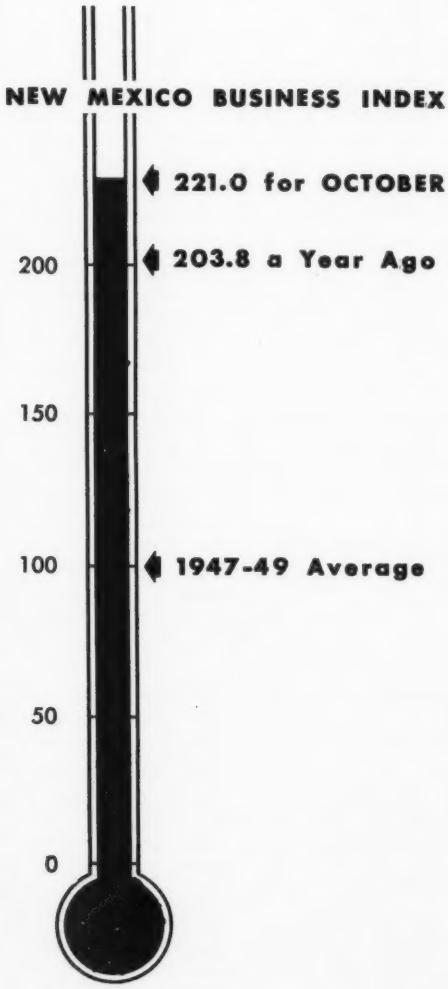
DECEMBER 1956

New Mexico BUSINESS



Reaction from the heights

recorded by September business dropped the October Index of Business Activity in New Mexico nearly 12 per cent below its figure for the previous month. Biggest offender was retail trade (which also gets the heaviest weight in the Index), and the worst performance among the retail firms was turned in by the automotive group which usually accounts for over one-quarter of all retail volume. Apparently this poor showing may be traced to a "wait and see" attitude on the part of car buyers during the period of new model introductions.

Sales of the subsistence group also dropped off in October, but this probably reflected only the decline in sales of eating places and tourist courts, expected at this time of year.

Only apparel stores and furniture and appliance dealers made gains over September, and these were small. The gain in furniture and appliance sales was not much comfort in view of the fact that sales were 25 per cent under the booming level of a year earlier.

Building permits declined again in October, reflecting the continuing softening of home building activity in 1956. Non-residential permits, however, made a good recovery which was continued into November.

(continued on next page)

A Proposal for Community Planning in this State
Index to Nine Volumes of New Mexico Business

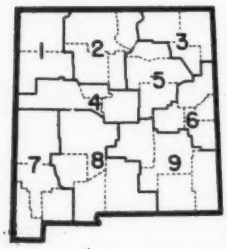
(continued from page one)

Despite sagging sales, most other measures of business activity showed up well in October. Employment, with an increase of 1.5 per cent over September, continued to show the steady gains which have characterized New Mexico's postwar expansion. Gains in construction employment--heavy and highway--were particularly encouraging. Mine production, except in copper, surged way ahead of 1955 levels. Even the farm picture was brightened somewhat by an upturn in farm prices.

This is how NOVEMBER looked in the early indexes:

	November Index (1947-49 mo. av. = 100)	Per Cent Change November 1956 From Oct. 1956	Nov. 1955
Bank Debits	225.6	- 5.3	+ 4.4
Bank Loans & Discounts	186.5	- 3.4	- 4.2
Demand Deposits	162.1	+ 1.4	- 1.5
Time Deposits	247.1	+ 1.2	+ 3.0
Building Permits - Total	237.9	+ 29.3	+ 69.5
Residential	199.8	+ 25.3	+ 52.8
Non-Residential	356.3	+ 68.5	+120.0
Postal Receipts	227.0	- 10.2	+ 6.2
All Farm Prices	82.1	- 3.3	+ 2.6
Livestock Prices	79.2	- 5.2	+ 1.7
Crop Prices	96.4	+ 2.1	+ 4.3

How did your district fare in NOVEMBER



District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
November 1956 Compared with October 1956									
Bank Debits	+ 0.4	- 7.9	- 2.9	- 7.3	- 4.9	+ 4.3	- 0.2	- 5.4	- 6.2
Loans and Discounts	+ 0.7	- 31.1	- 21.3	- 3.5	+ 37.1	+ 23.0	+ 7.1	+ 41.3	- 7.9
Demand Deposits	- 0.3	- 5.7	+ 1.2	+ 1.0	+ 0.2	+ 4.1	+ 6.8	+ 1.1	+ 4.7
Time Deposits	+ 2.3	- 0.2	+ 9.9	+ 0.7	+ 1.8	+ 1.8	+ 1.1	+ 2.7	+ 0.3
Postal Receipts	- 13.5	- 31.2	- 34.6	- 7.0	+ 33.7	- 12.1	- 17.4	- 1.3	+ 2.7
November 1956 Compared with November 1955									
Bank Debits	+ 15.8	- 49.4	+ 8.4	+ 12.7	- 3.4	+ 13.5	+ 11.1	+ 14.9	+ 7.9
Loans and Discounts	- 7.8	- 2.0	- 23.5	+ 11.2	- 11.0	- 29.5	+ 5.5	- 5.6	- 19.7
Demand Deposits	+ 21.4	- 35.1	+ 7.8	- 2.9	- 10.6	+ 5.5	+ 9.6	+ 14.3	+ 11.6
Time Deposits	+ 7.0	+ 3.2	+ 18.2	+ 2.6	- 3.5	+ 12.0	0.0	+ 59.8	- 15.7
Postal Receipts	+ 12.6	+ 3.1	+ 26.8	+ 2.3	- 27.0	- 4.5	- 0.3	+ 6.1	+ 15.7

Here's the complete roundup of OCTOBER indexes:

	October Index (1947-49 mo. av. = 100)	Per Cent Change October 1956 From Sept. 1956	Oct. 1955
Index of Business Activity	221.0	- 11.7	+ 8.5
Sales of Retail Stores	180.6	- 13.1	+ 1.0
Apparel Stores	155.7	+ 3.9	+ 7.3
Automotive Dealers	184.2	- 18.6	+ 0.6
Subsistence Stores	170.0	- 11.1	- 7.0
Furniture & Appliances	161.0	+ 8.0	- 24.6
Building Materials Dealers	160.4	- 8.2	- 1.4
Other Retail Stores	198.1	- 14.5	+ 13.4
Amusement Sales	107.2	- 51.5	- 20.8
Service Sales	241.5	- 17.1	+ 7.2
Contractors' Sales	346.6	- 11.7	+ 3.3
Wholesale Sales	138.5	- 15.3	+ 8.6
Public Utility Sales	266.6	- 3.2	+ 79.0
Manufacturers' Sales	264.4	- 22.2	- 15.1
Life Insurance Sales	426.9	- 17.5	+ 20.8
Bank Debits	238.2	+ 15.7	+ 13.8
Bank Loans & Discounts	193.1	+ 13.4	+ 4.2
Demand Deposits	159.9	+ 6.2	+ 1.0
Time Deposits	244.2	+ 0.5	+ 2.8
Business Failure Liabilities	145.9	+247.9	+377.1
Postal Receipts	252.8	+ 18.3	+ 16.9

	October Index (1947-49 mo. av. = 100)	Per Cent Change October 1956 From Sept. 1956	Oct. 1955
Wage Employment	152.1	+ 1.5	+ 7.7
Manufacturing	201.7	+ 0.5	+ 6.4
Mining	144.1	+ 1.2	+ 7.1
Transportation & Utilities	134.6	0.0	+ 7.4
Trade	148.5	+ 0.2	+ 4.5
Finance	228.3	0.0	+ 4.7
Services & Miscellaneous	111.4	+ 1.3	+ 7.7
Government	185.1	+ 2.9	+ 12.1
Contract Construction	127.4	+ 5.2	+ 7.3
Building Permits - Total	184.0	- 8.2	- 18.7
Residential	159.4	- 23.5	- 39.6
Non-Residential	211.4	+ 33.9	+ 62.7
Petroleum Production	197.3	+ 4.1	+ 5.6
Electric Power Production	224.0	- 4.1	+ 20.8
Metallics Production - Total	105.7	+ 3.3	+ 15.0
Mine Production - Copper	101.6	- 3.6	- 11.0
Mine Production - Lead	109.8	+ 8.6	+ 79.2
Mine Production - Zinc	114.0	+ 14.8	+ 79.8
Mine Production - Potash	268.0	+ 6.4	+ 12.9
All Farm Prices	84.8	+ 3.8	- 0.4
Livestock Prices	83.6	+ 2.5	- 2.0
Crop Prices	94.4	+ 6.7	+ 3.5

Sources:
Retail Sales data: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Potash Production: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Petroleum Production: N. M. Bureau of Revenue
Life Insurance Sales (New Ordinary): Life Insurance Agency Management Association
Wage Employment (all categories): N. M. Employment Security Commission
Electric Power Production: Federal Power Commission
Metallics Production: U. S. Bureau of Mines
Farm Prices: U. S. Agricultural Marketing Service
Bank data (all series), Postal Receipts, Building Permits: Bureau of Business Research
Business Failure Liabilities: Dun & Bradstreet, Inc.

When industrialists and mortgage firms are invited to invest in New Mexico communities, they ask about the quality of municipal services, protection of property values, and plans for civic growth. But good community planning costs money. Fortunately, we can present . . .

A Proposal for Assisting Local Planning in New Mexico

A Digest of an Article by HARRY S. COBLENTZ
Director, Planning Department, City of Albuquerque

Planning as a municipal activity is new to most New Mexico localities. Authority for community planning first appeared on our statute books in 1947, and since that time a score of towns and cities have passed zoning and planning ordinances and have established boards to administer them.

Most of these boards, however, urgently need technically-qualified persons to advise them on complex matters like water supplies, sewage disposal systems, traffic troubles, industrial districts, and so on. A survey conducted by the Planning Department of the City of Albuquerque last June showed that most New Mexico communities either reported a complete lack of professional help or were adding the complex tasks involved in community planning to the already lengthy list of duties of city engineers and other municipal employes.

(See results of Albuquerque Planning Department survey on Page 4.)

PROBLEM OF FUNDS

The problem is not unique to New Mexico. A small community usually does not have the volume of work--nor the funds--to maintain a qualified planning staff of its own. Yet when decisions must be made, the quality of advice should be as high--if not higher--in a small community as elsewhere. Some towns try to solve this problem by contracting with outside consulting firms for one-shot surveys or other planning services on a single basis. This has its limitations, however. It is like going to the Mayo clinic once or twice in a lifetime when you cannot afford a close and continuous association with a family doctor.

Fortunately, the federal government recognizes the problem and offers planning funds--on a 50-50 matching basis--to local communities. The Federal Housing Act of 1954 (Title VII, Section 701) requires that a state agency be set up to handle planning funds for communities with populations under 25,000, according to the 1950 Census. Also regional (city and county) planning commissions may be set up by areas with city populations exceeding 25,000 to deal directly with the Federal Housing Administration, but these commissions, too, must be authorized by a state enabling act.

We can see many advantages in the creation of both the state agency and the regional commissions. Monies received under this federal program may be spent on land-use plans, major street plans, recreations plans, basic surveys of population trends, economic base studies, off-street parking and loading facilities, over-all public improvement programs (but not specific public works project plans) and modernization of building, electrical, plumbing, and housing codes.

POOL OF SKILLS

Federal aid would solve many local planning problems, and a pool of skilled manpower in a state agency would make professional help available to our communities at all times. The advantages to the Highway Department and other state agencies are legion: at present, they spend vast sums of money on highways, health programs, economic development, and other state services in our cities and towns; but without detailed knowledge of how each community is growing--in other words, without some guidance from a local planning organization--it becomes increasingly difficult for the state official to adapt his program to the locality. Thus, the state agency becomes a ruler rather than an advisor. The program is imposed from above, and we see local protest meetings, delegations visiting the governor, and other evidences of state and local misunderstanding as a result.

LOCALITY SHARES COST

Each local community has a financial part to play in the carrying out of its planning in this federal-aid program. Each town must be able to provide up to 50 per cent of the costs of its planning services, part of this in cash and part in the technical services of its municipal employes. When necessary, it should also be possible for the regional planning commissions to obtain services of state planning personnel on a contract basis.

A SURVEY OF PLANNING IN NEW MEXICO

City	Population 1950 Census	Population 1956 Estimate	City Planning Commission	Board of Adjustment	Any Other* Commission	Zoning Ordinance	Contemplating Revision Due to Zoning Ord.	Contemplating Revision Due to Land Use	Professional Help
Alamogordo	6,783	8,000	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	Stanford Research Institute
Albuquerque	96,815	175,000	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	City Planners, Traffic Engineer, Dir. of Public Works, etc.
Artesia	8,244	9,267	no	no	no	no	no	no	None
Belen	4,495	6,500	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	None
Carlsbad	17,975	26,600	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	Tentative plans for Traffic Engineer
Clayton	3,515	3,951	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	City Engineer
Clovis	17,318	19,360	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	Consulting Engineers
Deming	5,672	7,200	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	City Engineer
Farmington	3,637	14,000	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	Seeking employe
Fort Sumner	1,982	2,228	no	no	no	no	yes	no	None
Gallup	9,133	11,500	yes	no	no	--	no	no	City Engineer
Grants	2,251	2,700	no	no	no	no	no	--	None
Hobbs	13,875	25,000	no	no	no	no	no	no	None
Las Cruces	12,325	16,000	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	S.R. Deboer & Co. Denver
Las Vegas-City Las Vegas-Town	7,494 6,269	15,385	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	None
Lordsburg	3,525	3,963	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	Yes, but not listed
Loving	1,487	2,000	no	no	no	no	no	no	None
Lovington	3,134	7,456	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	None
Mountainair	1,418	1,585	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	None
Portales	8,112	10,000	no	no	no	yes	no	no	City Engineer
Raton	8,241	9,264	yes	yes	--	no	yes	no	City Engineer Chairman, Park Dept.
Roswell	25,738	32,000	yes	no	no	yes	--	--	City Engineer
Santa Fe	27,998	31,928	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	None
Santa Rosa	2,199	3,000	no	no	no	no	no	no	None
Silver City	7,022	8,500	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	None
Socorro	4,334	5,250	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	City Engineer
Springer	1,558	1,800	no	no	no	no	no	no	None
Taos	1,815	3,500	no	no	no	no	yes	no	None
T or C	4,563	6,000	no	no	no	yes	no	no	City Manager is a Civil Engineer
Tucumcari	8,419	9,464	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	City Engineer
Tularosa	1,642	1,836	no	no	no	no	yes	no	--

*Any other special commission dealing with land use

Index to New Mexico Business - Volumes I through 9

This is a subject index to Volumes 1 through 9 of New Mexico Business, the review published each month of the year by the Bureau of Business Research of the University of New Mexico.

The aim of this publication is to bring timely and helpful statistical information to persons interested in New Mexico business, and at the same time to print articles and notes of enduring significance so that the combined issues of New Mexico Business will have long-term reference value.

Volume numbers and corresponding years of publication are: 1, 1948; 2, 1949; 3, 1950; 4, 1951; 5, 1952; 6, 1953; 7, 1954; 8, 1955; and 9, 1956. Issues are numbered 1 through 12, corresponding to the months, January through December.

Some statistical series appear regularly through several issues and these are noted thus: "5-3 thru 9-4", which indicates that the series appeared in all issues from March 1952 through April 1956.

The abbreviation "sup" in the column headed "page" indicates that the article was issued as a supplement to the designated issues and is paged separately. The abbreviation "var" in the column headed "page" indicates that the page number on which the item appears varies from issue to issue.

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Retail Sales in New Mexico - October, 1956

(add 000's)

County	Apparel	Automotive	Subsistence	Furniture & Appliances	Building Material	Other	Total
Bernalillo	$1,242	$ 6,347	$ 5,009	$1,546	$2,807	$ 7,532	$24,483
Catron	0	33	39	8	4	34	118
Chaves	204	1,655	1,265	170	622	1,469	5,385
Colfax	26	401	286	26	119	363	1,221
Curry	133	645	663	146	153	690	2,430
De Baca	0	90	70	6	18	113	297
Dona Ana	112	982	894	276	454	888	3,606
Eddy	232	1,425	1,248	241	368	1,854	5,368
Grant	31	509	453	92	74	466	1,625
Guadalupe	6	214	132	6	21	116	495
Harding	0	41	4	0	3	43	91
Hidalgo	10	159	148	6	45	177	545
Lea	226	3,626	1,689	274	482	3,504	9,801
Lincoln	4	157	140	15	71	135	522
Los Alamos	17	117	96	9	2	125	366
Luna	59	354	277	43	17	301	1,051
McKinley	49	664	733	116	161	905	2,628
Mora	2	47	16	0	13	52	130
Otero	63	625	633	120	414	564	2,419
Quay	38	456	331	27	114	321	1,287
Rio Arriba	15	330	233	30	92	366	1,066
Roosevelt	34	364	296	288	109	269	1,360
Sandoval	0	88	159	15	10	147	419
San Juan	105	2,109	795	82	526	2,084	5,701
San Miguel	11	257	286	78	56	349	1,037
Santa Fe	196	1,199	1,065	182	409	1,639	4,690
Sierra	2	162	150	3	30	120	467
Socorro	18	239	195	7	112	164	735
Taos	11	200	283	43	17	203	757
Torrance	1	227	62	18	16	139	463
Union	21	150	129	31	53	149	533
Valencia	37	560	386	57	102	439	1,581
Unallocated	178	685	1,434	134	321	3,420	6,172
Total	$3,083	$25,117	$19,599	$4,095	$7,815	$29,140	$88,849

Source: School Tax Division, N. M. Bureau of Revenue

Note: Sales of new and used automobiles are now being reported on a regular basis again and, for the first time since our March issue, we are including them in the "Automotive" column above. Please note that this column and the "Total" column are not comparable with the corresponding columns in the past eight issues.
Complete automotive sales figures for 1956 will be given in the year-end tables in our forthcoming February issue.

Volume 9, Number 12

New Mexico Business Is Published Monthly By The Bureau of Business Research College of Business Administration
University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

Subscription Price Two Dollars Per Year

Entered as second-class matter January 31, 1949, at the post office at Albuquerque, New Mexico, under the act of August 24, 1912.

Ralph L. Edgel
Director

Vicente T. Ximenes
Research Associate

R. B. Goode
Statistician

A. A. Blumenfeld
Research Assistant

Sheila M. Fisher
Asst. Statistician

Stanley J. Brasher
Research Assistant

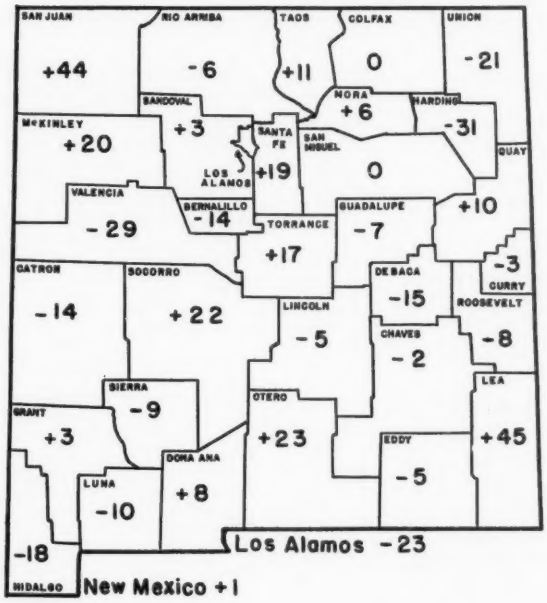
Shirley Huzarski
Research Assistant

Arch Napier
Publications Editor

Anita S. Park
Secretary

RETAIL SALES: A Comparison

Per Cent Change: October '56 from October '55



NEW MEXICO BUSINESS
Bureau of Business Research
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, N. M.